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SIPDIS

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TAGS: [OPRC](#) [KMDR](#) [KPAO](#) [TW](#)

SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION: TAIWAN'S SOVEREIGNTY ISSUE

A) "To Demonstrate Taiwan's Independent and Autonomous National Status Using Historical Facts and [Taiwan's ] Public Opinion"

The pro-independence "Liberty Times" editorialized (12/3):

". [Secretary of State Colin] Powell said in late October that Taiwan is not a sovereign state. The real meaning behind Powell's statement is that it has unveiled [the fact that] Taiwan's sovereignty issue was not thoroughly resolved after the end of the Second World War and that Taiwan is still wearing the coat of the Republic of China that is not recognized by the international community. Today, Taiwan people have full control of their national sovereignty; they can elect their own state leader through the exercise of the people's free will; they possesses their own military, currency and judicial system. All of these have all the more verified Taiwan's independent sovereign status. We can say that the Taiwan people have used their actions to make up for the missing parts in history. But the question for the future lies in: when will the United Nations and the international community really face the history and the hard facts and respect Taiwan people's basic rights under the UN Charter to establish their own country .?"

B) "Restoring Credibility a Key Issue Facing President Chen"

The conservative, pro-unification, English-language "China Post" said in an editorial (12/3):

"The past week the people of Taiwan once again had a chance to see how unabashedly their leader President Chen Shui-bian uses a two-faced strategy to address his controversial policies, including his renewed tension with Washington. But how successful such double-dealing is remains to be seen. .

"So Chen seemed to be playing a two-faced game. On the one hand, he wanted to use the action of holding up the referendum bill to reassure Washington that he would not push for a popular vote to adopt a new Constitution during his term.

"But on the other hand, Chen himself would continue his referendum rhetoric ahead of the December 11 legislative election to rally support for his party candidates. And he believes that Washington will understand that his rhetoric was merely election language intended for the voters. To ensure that will be the case, he even used the meeting with [Utah Governor Olene] Walker to call on Washington to trust him. .

"Therefore, the most urgent issue Chen might need to address is rebuilding his credibility severely undermined by his past fondness for saying different things to different people and his tendency to flip-flop on policy and position. Unless this credibility gap can be overcome, it won't be easy for him to improve relations with either Washington or Beijing or the opposition even if he finally wins a legislative majority, which would greatly boost his authority and strengthen his hand in dealing with domestic and foreign issues."

PAAL